

## HISTORIOSOPHICAL AND ANTHROPOCENTRIC ASPECTS IN THE NOVELS BY YURIY KOSACH

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**Purpose.** The article deals with the novels by Yuriy Kosach in the context of historiosophical and anthropocentric issues of the European and national existentialism. The study is based on the little-known historical novels “The Rubicon of Khmelnytskyi” and “The Day of Wrath”. **Theoretical basis.** Yuriy Kosach’s prose oeuvre is an impressive and original phenomenon of the Ukrainian creative writing. It greatly regenerated the Ukrainian fiction in worldview, problematic and thematic, genre and stylistic aspects, showing the concordance with the need to modernize national and European literary-aesthetic consciousness of the 20th c. The historical and adventure novels “The Rubicon of Khmelnytskyi” and “The Day of Wrath”, which present a person against the historical background, are particularly conspicuous in the aspect of artistic portrayal of historical events and figures. Kosach managed to integrally render the concept of a person, to apprehend the depth of its nature and multiplicity of senses of its existence, to reconsider the complexity of psychological filling of a person’s inner world, to present a broad view of the problem of relations between people, to originally substantiate his anthropological concept which is the embodiment of the “national code”. **Originality.** It traces the evolution of the word picture of B. Khmelnytskyi, which unfolds against the background of sociohistorical events and moral challenges. For the first time it has been proved that in his historical and adventure novels with the elements of philosophism (existential antejizm) and psychologism, the prose writer showed the specificity of forming the historic figure of Hetman as a wise European helmsman, a state-minded person, and a leader of the Ukrainians. **Conclusions.** It has been emphasized that Yuriy Kosach raised important psychological, historiosophic and ontological problems such as a human being and its existence, life and death, psychological splitting, fate and a person’s destiny, morality, national identity, struggle for own rights and freedoms, feeling of responsibility for others etc.

**Keywords:** anthropocentrism, historiosophy, historical novel, national identity, philosophism, existentialism, psychologism; Europeanness.

**Introduction.** A great emigration stratum of the Ukrainian literary works enters the literary and national consciousness changing the idea about the artistic images of the Ukrainian Word in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A lot has been done, published, read and realized, which has caused the appearance of a new, unlocated picture of the Ukrainian literature. It is multifaceted and multidimensional with impressive “plots” of authors’ fates. It is, however, too early to talk about the completeness and integrity of these ideas as many works are still unknown, insufficiently studied, without any projection on general tendencies of literary development. Likewise, an objective study of literary phenomena and artistic structures prioritize an artist’s self-identity, their individual creative code caused by their original sensation of the world and word. Therefore, there is a need to interpret a poetic manner as reflections on ontological problems, as an artistic realization of sense of existence, and as an anthropocentric dimension.

The figure of Yuriy Kosach stands out among the writers of this kind. The representative of noble line of Drahomanov and Kosach entered the Ukrainian literature as a many-sided personality. He was a talented prose writer, a literary critic, a poet, a playwright, and a multilingual translator. He was one of the organizers of the Artistic Ukrainian Movement in emigration (1945–1948).

Yuriy Kosach created original genre varieties in the Ukrainian novel writing, which closely combine the author’s national-immanent and European perception of the world: *Looking into the Eyes of Death* (1936), *Intoxication* (1937), *The Rubicon of Khmelnytskyi* (1941), *Aeneas and Life of Others* (1946), *The Day of Wrath* (1947), *Cygnus Constellation* (1983), *The Owner of Pontida* (1987), *The Hellish Rock* (1988).

**Statement of basic materials.** According to George Yu. Shevelov, the key problem of the Ukrainian emigration prose of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. is human existence which is represented in three dimensions: historical; in the context of being and acting as well as certain changes of a person under conditions of complicated existence; being and meeting with the strange world [10]. One of the distinctive feature of Kosach’s historical novel is reference to a person and its existence. It is the historical novel where the author artistically interprets human fates in the flow of history. As O. Samoliuk rightfully states, main philosophical problems of anthropogeny depend on the peculiarities of a certain nation and its mental codes [8].

The central historical figure in the novels is Bohdan Khmelnytskyi, who was an important person in the Ukrainian history. His state-minded views became a certain stage in establishing the independent state, transforming the consciousness of the Ukrainian nation. The historical figure of the famous military leader and the idea of liberation war in Ukraine under his leadership were apprehended and interpreted by scholars in different ways. Despite this, Khmelnytskyi’s life and his political activities became a crucially important

and valuable episode in the Ukrainian history, which considerably influenced the formation of the Ukrainian state.

M. Stekh summarizes the main conceptual approaches to the explanation of the significance of the hetman personality which were formed in the Ukrainian intellectual thought: M. Kostomarov's "populist" view is based on the image of the "class" hetman who defended the interests of Cossack foremen, made several fatal political mistakes (this view was developed by M. Hrushevskiy, M. Drahomanov, etc.); T. Shevchenko's "nationalist" concept includes elevation of the liberation war under the leadership of B. Khmelnytskyi and, at the same time, condemnation of the "embryo of the national catastrophe" – the Treaty of Pereyaslav (1954). (M. Holubets, Yu. Lypa, M. Mikhnovskiy, Lesya Ukrainka)[9, p. 189]; V. Lypynskiy's "statist" concept considers B. Khmelnytskyi as a leader and a statist (I. Krypyakevych, Ye. Malaniuk, S. Tomashivskiy, and Yu. Kosach).

According to M. Stekh, "the most interesting statist' vision of the Khmelnytskyi Uprising in literature was presented by Yuriy Kosach" [3, p. 436]. In search of the material for his novels, the prose writer tried to find the moments in the history which were full of mysteriousness and mystique. So his work in archives and libraries, cooperation with famous historians and scholars such as O. Ohloblyn, M. Hodiyeu, M. Hlobenkov, L. Biletskyi, P. Kurinnyi helped to realize his artistic conception. The most important historical subjects of his novels include gradual formation of the worldview position of B. Khmelnytskyi as a wise European helmsman, a leader of the Ukrainians; comprehension of the identity of the Ukrainian nation, reasons for its "revolutionary failure" [3, p. 436]. Yu. Kosach planned to develop this subject in his trilogy *Caesar of Steppes*, but unfortunately he failed to do that.

In the novels *The Military Unit at Dunkirk* (1936), *The Rubicon of Khmelnytskyi* (1943) Yu. Kosach presents the story of the birth of the hero who is in the state of choice, depicts in detail unbearable torments which an "existentialist" person suffers in the process of approaching freedom; similar to the protagonist of Ulas Samchuk's novel *What Fire Doesn't Heal* [6]. As M. Ilnytskyi states, in *The Rubikon of Khmelnytskyi*, Yu. Kosach, first of all, aimed at finding the answer to the question: "What made Bohdan Khmelnytskyi a diplomat and a statesman on the all-European scale?" [2, p. 427]. The image of the Cossack leader is presented in the romantic light. Khmelnytskyi tries to self-actualize, to gain trust to himself as a hetman, to persuade the Cossacks that he is the person who will lead them to freedom. However, it was difficult for the hetman to do that as he felt the crisis of existence, partly lost faith in his own powers and in the state-forming ability of the whole nation. The writer depicts him as a lonely man who was left alone with his pain and despair, and therefore felt existential emptiness. Trying to reproduce Khmelnytskyi's inner feelings, the prose writer uses the technique of artistic parallelism comparing his sorrow with the "sea" which was rambling and

roaring, “insatiable, stretching to where the eye could see, grey, parting, ominous” [4, p. 155]. The hero was left alone with his despair, but with the help of mind he could tame the “rogue”, the thing which caused bad thoughts, made him lose faith, and after all “ruined” him as a leader.

Depicting his character, the writer referred to his human features, to the positive and negative peculiarities of his character, emphasized the duality of his nature. In the novel, getting lost in his own thoughts, feeling lack of power, and not knowing what the fate had it there for him, Khmelnytskyi tried to drown his sorrows. The news about the failure of the Seim in Warsaw was the last drop. Thus, presentation of psychological dissociation of the character is a characteristic feature of the prose writer’s style and is a masterly way of the psychological portrayal of the personality.

A reader automatically becomes a participant of events taking place in the novel and a witness of all contradictions and conflicts in the character’s soul. The image of the Cossack leader in *The Rubicon of Khmelnytskyi* is presented in such a way that a reader can not only admire his greatness and power, but also get imbued with the complexity of his inner “filling”. It makes a recipient realize the reasons and deeds of the character, try to comprehend the essence of his individual and unique human nature. The historical events become a peculiar background for worldview discussions and portrayal of Khmelnytskyi’s psychological state.

A special attention in the novel is paid to the psychological picture of the character, which is possible due to the modified form of the historical novel. This form gives the writer endless possibilities to grasp the dialectics of feelings with the help of psychological portrait. Yu. Kosach presents the dynamic psychological portrait of the main character – Bohdan Khmelnytskyi. It constantly changes with the portrait details being added and modified in the process of the plot development.

The changes happening in the character’s soul, immersion in his internal state bring the novel *The Rubicon of Khmelnytskyi* closer to the psychological prose. Trying to make the right choice, the character is involved in the duel with himself and external world. This world is cruel; that’s why, in the novel by Yuriy Kosach, Khmelnytskyi often raises in his monologues important philosophical issues of existence, problems of a person in the world, reflects on freedom and national identity.

The problem of the personality growth, its moral choice in the process of different ordeals, the problem of the person moving from passive observation to active participation in creating the history are the main problems of the historical novel. Properly speaking, the main character in the historical and adventure novel *The Rubicon of Khmelnytskyi* by Kosach undergoes the process of his personality development. He tried to choose the right historical way of development both for his nation and for himself as a leader. At the beginning of the novel, Bohdan Khmelnytskyi did not know who he was and who

he wanted to be, tried to understand his mission. The character felt lonely, “he was an executor for himself. He forged hours of loneliness like a blade of a sword” [4, p. 178], because he did not know what the fate was preparing for him.

A peculiar continuation of the Khmelnytskyi Uprising subject, a deeper and more complex portrayal of the image of the Cossack leader is in the novel with the symbolic title *The Day of Wrath* (1948). Not without reason, it was highly appreciated by critics, for it is, undoubtedly, one of the best works by Yu. Kosach, in which the writer managed to present the original word picture of the hetman and to realize his own anthropocentric concept. The image of a person, the problem of its development and coexistence is presented in socialization, in contact with the historical period and people who represent it. Analyzing the novels by Yu. Kosach, George Yu. Shevelov emphasized that the novel *The Day of Wrath* depicts “how people grow in a political struggle, how the leading men of the Ukrainian state, which was reviving at that time, are brought up and how they act” [10, p. 217]. In the afterword to the new edition of the novel, R. Radyshevsky noted that life in emigration made it possible for the prose writer due to his love for history to embody the “depth of internal drama, tragedy of a man who tirelessly tried to understand himself, to realize his place in the complex reality of the transition period of history” [3, p. 449].

Comparing *The Rubicon of Khmelnytskyi* and *The Day of Wrath*, Shevelov draws attention to the “maturity” of the author's style in his later work, “The devices became more economical; the word became more suggestive. If previously the author tried to influence the reader with the melody of whole sentences, now he is becoming more lapidary and gives much more weight to a separate word, features, dotted line of impressions” [10, p. 225]; however, the remains of ornamentality are still present in the work. If the novel *The Rubicon of Khmelnytskyi* reflects neo-baroque and neo-romanticism style tendencies, *The Day of Wrath* emphasizes social problems of the humanity, interest in solving them through perception of one person, focusing on profound mental processes, which means that expressionist elements dominate in the work. The author expresses moments of pain, cry, despair, tragedy, etc., which increases a psycho-emotional impact on the recipient. Psychologism is intensified with the help of numerous dialogues, direct speech, and fragmentarity of writing. One can feel constantly growing emotional “tension”, which might lead to a kind of “emotional breakdown” [12, p.8]. In the novel Kosach uses the principle of cinematography, which manifests itself in contrasting various phenomena or events that cause certain emotions. The events develop dynamically. Yu. Kosach often leaves the most interesting moment, interrupting the story. Also, there may be several events that a reader can follow at the same time. Due to this technique, the author can represent the complexity of the inner world of a person, its changeability [11, p.408].

M. Stekh considers the novel to be “a means of ‘desovietization’ of ideas about the Khmelnytskyi Uprising and the history of Ukraine on the whole” [9, p. 210], and notes that the novel dispel the myth about the non-European nature of Ukraine, the commonality of its history with Russia, which was imposed on the Ukrainians for years. The researcher draws a parallel with the present time, comparing the struggle for independence under the leadership of Khmelnytskyi with the Revolution of Dignity, because the values for which the struggle still continues remain the same: personal liberty, freedom and labor are “the same human dignity, which in the 21<sup>st</sup> c. made the multicultural society of the modern Ukrainian state established on the ethnically Ukrainian base get involved in struggle” [9, p. 217].

Y. Petrovskyi-Shtern advocates the idea of the European context of the events depicted in the works by Yu. Kosach. In the novel under study, the scholar draws attention to the language of the work, which, in his opinion, represents the multiculturalism of the Ukrainian army. It is proved by the presence of macaronisms, dialectisms, jargon, borrowings from other language in the text. In the opinion of the scholar, this testifies to the confidence and power of the Ukrainian language, which is open to such experiments [13]. In the novel, the characters are people of different nationalities and cultures; in particular, the author depicts the French, Germans, Poles, Jews, and Tatars. The characters' speech is often macaronic. It is a peculiar mix of the Ukrainian, German, Latin, Polish, Old Church Slavonic languages, etc. As M. Stekh points out, slang expressions, jargonisms, dialecticism, Western Ukrainian ones, in particular, “are organically synthesized into the Ukrainian discourse, creating the image of the Ukrainian language as an exclusively self-confident cultural entity that is never feel ashamed of borrowings and is open to any influence” [9]. Yu. Kosach is not afraid to experiment, to introduce such elements making the novel archaic and exotic, at the same time. The language of the work helps to realize the concept of multiculturalism, completing the idea of events being on the European scale. Language is the key to decoding the national culture, the expression plane of the mentality of a certain ethnic group in the form of associations transforming into a cultural concept. It represents a person as a bearer of certain mental codes.

In the novel, Ukraine is originally portrayed throughout. Ukraine is not a “weak” figure in the aggressive Polish or Russian policy; it has its own destiny and chooses its own path – a free and independent way of the European country. As Y. Petrovskyi-Shtern convincingly proves, Yu. Kosach achieved a real breakthrough with his new vision of Ukraine. His Ukraine is a multinational European country belonging to ethnic Ukrainians and at the same time making it possible to unite people of other nationalities, descent and religion on its territory. It is a popular anti-colonial, national democratic, rather than nationalist (D. Dontsov) state as a “crucible of the European policy” [13, p. 184]. The image of Khmelnytskyi complements the multicultural image of Ukraine.

In the historical novel *The Day of Wrath*, the author continued to develop his concept of a person struggling for his own human rights. The novel conceptualizes the causes of the national struggle, presents the characters, their existential experiences, psychological visions, etc. According to L. Romashchenko, the novel “interlaces two layers: external, eventful, and internal, psychological – Khmelnytskyi’s comprehension of his own personal grief (the murder of his son Ostop by Chaplynskyi, the death of his wife Olena) and a nationwide tragedy bursting with wrath of retribution” [7, p. 63]. The image of nature amplifies the motif of anxiety and the father’s (in the person of B. Khmelnytskyi himself) weep for his lost son, “The dark black saga of the Dnieper blazed up; the dark sycamore crowns got together overhead, <...> and the lilies arched their snake stalks drinking the wine of humidity from beakers; the lilies blazed up as well...” [3, p. 5]. The artistic portrayal of nature and the use of original metaphors, parallelisms, etc. produce psycho-emotional stress. According to the historical sources, the personal tragedy of the Cossack leader became the spark that ignited the fire of the national uprising for freedom. The prose writer managed to reproduce the complexity of the inner world of B. Khmelnytskyi who wants to punish those guilty of his misery, and, therefore, the misfortune of his own people; he strives for revenge. Nevertheless, despite his personal sorrow, he thinks big: his thoughts are projected from a personal tragedy to the tragedy of his native enslaved people. The character realizes his duty to fight for the rights of the Motherland, “he knows what he wants. He is the man made from the clay from which the Caesars are molded” [3, p. 16].

In the historical adventure novel under study, Bohdan Khmelnytskyi appeals to God to help him, who is mutilated, broken by injustice, heal his wounds, conquer his passion in order to stand up for “the glorious people of Roksolia, my Ukraine” [3, p. 17], as his personal tragedy is the embodiment of the tragedy of the whole nation. The novel is imbued with high patriotism, the desire to gain freedom and glory of their native land at any price. The author's task is to give the Europeans a work of art that would most fully depict a representative of the Ukrainian nation – a courageous Ukrainian – a fighter for freedom, but not an ordinary soldier, but a leader – a person with a sincere heart and clear mind, with high humane values and ideals, nobility and genuine patriotic and civic features, loyalty to democratic principles.

In *The Rubicon of Khmelnytskyi*, Yu. Kosach portrayed how the Cossacks lost their faith in their hetman, the moment of their betrayal. Khmelnytskyi, however, managed to defend the honor of his name, proved to everyone, and above all to himself, that he was worthy to be called the “Cossack perfect”. Kosach's character is a respectable man who deserves the title of Hetman, but he, like an average person, has the right to mistakes. Khmelnytskyi corrected his mistake, managed to realize his important mission.

In the novel *The Day of Wrath*, the author develops the image of B. Khmelnytskyi's personality providing it with new conceptual features. In the novel under study, he no longer tries to prove anything to anyone, since he became self-reliant, confident and independent in his actions and deeds; even his personal tragedy did not push him off on the chosen path, but on the contrary, added confidence in his own mission and his own strengths. The first meeting of Khmelnytskyi with the Cossacks and peasantry after the tragedy presents the Cossack leader as a wise commander, a convincing speaker, a gifted strategist and tactician. Khmelnytskyi is portrayed as a strong man, yet round-shouldered, with an overgrown beard and eyebrows joined on the bridge of the nose; his wolfish eyes pierced. We learn about Khmelnytskyi's certain features from the first chapter, mainly from other characters. From Father Hentsel Mokrskyi, we find out that Khmelnytskyi was his pupil, but differed from others over his views on life, strange perception of the outside world. He had no friends, he was nicknamed a wolf, and it was difficult for him to deal with his peers. He called his books his friends. It was through self-education that he acquired the status of not only a militant, but also wise commander, who not only fought, but also published decrees, wrote letters, communicated with representatives of other states. B. Khmelnytskyi established diplomatic relations trying to create not a barbaric state, doomed to live in constant wars and a tense situation, but a democratic one that will exist in concert with other European powers.

The vivid character of the novel *Rimsha* calls B. Khmelnytskyi "the leader of poor people", a man of "stern temper" [3, p. 56] who knows what he wants. Two conflicting versions of the origin and mission of this man are present in the work: according to the the first one, Khmelnytskyi is given by God to save the Ukrainians and their lands from the power of invaders; the second version belongs to the opponents of Khmelnytskyi. Korsak, personally, claims that "this person's power is not from human capacities" [3, p. 395], that this "man got his power from Satan himself..." [3, p. 396]. The Lviv philosopher Roslavetsky, the character who appears in many works of the writer, reflecting the author's views in the novel *The Day of Wrath*, is convinced that "this man is insane, that it will never be stopped or broken by any force" [3, p. 375], and this person is Ukrainian.

In his article "The Formation of the Ruler" (Notatky pro B. Khmelnytskoho) [Formation of the Ruler (Notes on B. Khmelnytskyi)], Ukrainka trybuna, ch. 1, Cherven 17, 1948). Yu. Kosach attempts to refute the distorted image of B. Khmelnytsky in Polish and Ukrainian historiography and fiction, in particular, his image as an idler, not a patriot. In the portrayal of the Cossack army in *The Rubicon of Khmelnytskyi*, the author applies burlesque. So, in the novel, the warriors do not eat, but "devour", do not drink, but "gulp down", but respect and obey his leader. In *The Day of Wrath*, the author negatively depicts the image of a drunkard, noting that under the influence of al-

cohol, a person not only loses control over his own deeds and feelings, but also a human face.

At the beginning of the novel *The Day of Wrath* the Cossack army is presented as a mighty force that does not want to surrender to enemies. However, the faith of the Zaporozhian Cossacks and registered Cossacks in the hetman was not completely formed. In the final battle, the hetman's army is depicted as militant and brave, despite numerous losses, the Cossacks fight hard, because their struggle is for freedom, for free existence on their native land. In the novel, B. Khmelnytskyi is presented as a devout believer who, in times of grief and sadness, appeals to God for help, "God! I believe in Your mercy and I resort to it. I ask you for this side, for this nation of mine. <...> Give this nation a victory over the foe, give it freedom in this world" [3, p. 412]. Yu. Kosach created his own religious philosophical concept of a person. In his novel, the anthropological subject matter acquires an expressive theocentric content. The author presents an ethical and moral program of human life, the essence of which is in the indissoluble connection of a person with God.

The novels by Yu. Kosach *The Rubicon of Khmelnytskyi* and *The Day of Wrath* have also distinctive features of a historical and philosophical novel, which raises important issues of ideological and psychological aspects. Kosach's characters are imbued with deep thought on their being and the being of their people. The presence of existential problems, such as existence on the verge, between life and death, choice, freedom, spiritual formation of the personality, remaining human in the difficult situation of a spiritual breakdown as well as affirmation of the personality values and historical motivation of its deeds, is an important dominant in the novel, which is an essential feature of the historical and philosophical novel [12]. The novel is full of lively discussions concerning important philosophical problems. As R. Radyshevsky rightfully put it, in his works Yu. Kosach highly appreciated nobility, heroism, "occidentalism" (orientation to the West), great power statehood, "organically implemented the slogan of Yu. Lypa, "foster educate and create statehood" because it was the principle of the artist himself" [3, p. 439].

**Conclusions.** *The Rubicon of Khmelnytskyi* and *The Day of Wrath* by Yu. Kosach are historical and adventure novels with the elements of philosophy and psychologism. They focus on the life path of the prominent historical figure that changed the course of history. Due to Khmelnytskyi, according to the historians, a new state – Ukraine – appeared on the map of the world. Depicting the period of Khmelnytskyi Uprising, Yu. Kosach historiographically generalized the essence of events, gave them his own appraisal from the point of view of universal human moral values. The author, trying to fill the "blank pages" in the history of our nation, raised an important issue of formation of a hero, delving deeply into his inner world. At the same time, the writer managed to tackle important psychological, historiosophical and other

global problems that bothered the mankind on the whole. In the prose of Yu. Kosach, as O. Dniprovsky believes, one can feel the hand of the master, who not only aims at telling a certain story or event, but also wants to do it in a new way “like nobody else did it” [1, p. 5]. Yu. Kosach succeeded in it due to scrupulous documentation and artistic filigree work, skillful combination of the elements of history, philosophy, psychology, science, cinema, and even ethnography in the novel. In the work, Khmelnytskyi is portrayed as a wise statesman, a ruler with far-seeing vision, a strong, powerful and at the same time responsible figure for whom the grief of his native people became personal.

Yu. Kosach created original genre modifications in Ukrainian historical novel studies, which are closely linked to the author's national and European outlook, his own anthropological concept. The dominants of Yu. Kosach's anthropocentric artistic thought is awareness of the person itself, finding his own God in soul, and realizing the value and purpose of personal existence, overcoming its own fear and desire for revenge, irresistible aspiration for freedom.

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## ІСТОРІОСОФСЬКИЙ ТА АНТРОПОЦЕНТРИЧНИЙ АСПЕКТИ В РОМАНІСТИЦІ ЮРІЯ КОСАЧА

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**Мета.** Стаття присвячена дослідженню романістики Юрія Косача в контексті історіософської та антропоцентричної проблематики європейського та національного екзистенціалізму (на матеріалі маловідомих історичних романів “Рубікон Хмельницького” та “День гніву”).

**Теоретичний базис.** Прозова творчість Ю. Косача – яскраве і самобутнє явище українського письменства – помітно оновила українську белетристику у світоглядному, проблемно-тематичному, жанрово-стильовому планах, виявляючи суголосність із потребами модернізації національної та європейської літературно-естетичної свідомості ХХ ст. Особливо прикметними в аспекті художнього зображення значущих подій і постатей є історико-пригодницькі романи “Рубікон Хмельницького” та “День гніву”, які репрезентують особистість на історичному тлі. Юрію Косачу вдалося по-новаторськи цілісно передати художньо-історіософську концепцію людини, збагнути екзистенціальну та онтологічну глибинність її природи та множинність сенсів її існування, переосмислити складність психологічного наповнення внутрішнього світу героя, широко представити проблему взаємин між людьми, оригінально обґрунтувати свою антропологічну концепцію, яка є талановитим белетристичним втіленням українського “націєкоду”.

**Наукова новизна.** Простежено багатовимірну еволюцію художнього образу Б. Хмельницького, яка розгортається на тлі соціально-історичних подій та моральних випробувань. Уперше доведено, що в історико-пригодницьких романах із елементами екзистенціального антейзму та психологізму прозаїк висвітлив специфіку становлення історичної постаті гетьмана, заглибившись у його внутрішній світ як мудрого європейського керманіча, державотворця, очільника українців.

**Висновки.** Акцентовано на тому, що Ю. Косач порушив важливі психологічні, історіософські та онтологічні проблеми, зокрема людини та її екзистенції, життя та смерті, психологічного роздвоєння, фатуму та людської долі, моралі, національної ідентичності, боротьби за власні права і свободи, почуття відповідальності перед іншими тощо.

**Ключові слова:** антропоцентризм, історіософія, історичний роман, національна ідентичність, філософізм, екзистенціалізм, психологізм, європейськість.